

Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (canceled).

1 2. (currently amended) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 36, [[1,]] further
3 comprising: a Computer Telephony Interface (CTI) unit,
4 wherein said CTI unit is connected to said connection
5 device to monitor the status of said connection device,
6 and further wherein said CTI unit is connected to said
7 CATI unit to monitor the status of said CATI unit and
8 said agent using said CATI unit; and still further
9 wherein said CTI unit is connected to said IVR unit to
10 monitor said conducting of said automated survey.

1 3. (canceled).

1 4. (currently amended) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 36, [[3,]] wherein
3 said ~~pre-determined~~ survey includes ~~format uses said a~~
4 drill-down survey technique, wherein a following survey
5 question depends on the answer to a previous question.

1 5. (canceled).

1 6. (currently amended) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 36, [[5,]] wherein
3 said system is adapted for accepting ~~conducting of said~~
4 ~~automated and/or said manual surveys~~ includes the use of
5 a verbatim response to a survey question, wherein the
6 participant can orally communicate detailed opinions to

7 said IVR unit or said CATI agent, respectively, and
8 further wherein said verbatim[[s]] is ~~are~~ stored in said
9 database.

1 7. (currently amended) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 6, further
3 comprising:

4 a processing unit for converting data stored in said
5 database ~~said stored responses to said surveys~~
6 into survey information; and
7 a presenting unit for presenting said survey
8 information to a consumer.

1 8. (original) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 7, wherein said
3 survey information is derived from a plurality of surveys
4 derived from a plurality of participants, and further
5 wherein said system presents said survey information to
6 said consumer over a computer network, and still further
7 wherein said consumer must be validated before said
8 system will allow the consumer to access said survey
9 information.

1 9. (original) The system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information of claim 8, wherein said
3 survey information is available for presenting to said
4 consumer within 24 hours of the completion of the
5 conducting of said plurality of surveys.

1 Claims 10-15 (canceled)

1 16. (currently amended) A process for collecting and

2 presenting survey information comprising the steps of:

3 (I) selecting a participant from a list of
4 potential participants;

5 (II) connecting the participant to a survey
6 communication system;

7 (III) inquiring whether the participant is willing
8 to accept a transfer to an automated survey;

9 (IV) transferring the participant's communication
10 system connection to an automated survey unit
11 only if the participant assents to said
12 transfer;

13 ([[I]]V) conducting said survey interview, wherein
14 said conducting is performed by said automated
15 survey unit if the participant assented to said
16 transfer, but said conducting is performed
17 manually if the participant does not assent,
18 and further wherein an automated survey unit
19 accepts oral responses from the participant,
20 said oral responses being processed using voice
21 recognition into survey data;

22 (VI) if said user is undergoing an automated survey,
23 manually continuing said survey from the
24 current point forward upon a voice request of
25 the user to stop said automated survey; and

26 (VII) saving said survey interview in a
27 database.

1 17. (original) The process of collecting and
2 presenting survey information as in claim 16, wherein
3 said conducting of said survey interview is performed by

4 providing survey questions to participant using a pre-
5 determined survey procedure utilizing drill-down
6 questioning, wherein a following survey question depends
7 on the answer to a previous question.

1 18. (currently amended) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 17, further
3 comprising the steps of:

4 (VIII) processing said survey data into survey
5 information;

6 (IX[[I]]) saving said survey information in a
7 database; and

8 (~~III~~X)presenting said survey information to a
9 consumer.

1 19. (currently amended) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 16, wherein
3 said transferring of the participant's communication
4 system connection to said automated survey unit occurs by
5 action of an agent using a terminal only if said survey
6 participant agrees to said transfer, and further wherein
7 said survey interview is conducted manually by an agent
8 if the participant does not agree to said transfer.

1 20. (previously presented) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 19, wherein
3 said conducting of said survey interview is performed by
4 providing survey questions to the participant using a
5 pre-determined survey question procedure utilizing drill-
6 down questioning for said conducting of both manual and
7 automated surveys, wherein a following survey question
8 depends on the answer to a previous question.

1 21. (previously presented) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 19, wherein
3 said agent can transfer the participant back to said
4 automated survey unit to continue said survey interview,
5 and further wherein the participant participating in an
6 automated survey can be transferred to said agent by a
7 voice command from the participant.

1 22. (previously presented) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 21, wherein
3 said conducting of said survey interview is performed by
4 providing survey questions to the participant using a
5 pre-determined survey question procedure utilizing drill-
6 down questioning for said conducting of both manual and
7 automated surveys, wherein a following survey question
8 depends on the answer to a previous question.

1 23. (currently amended) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 22 ,
3 further comprising the steps of:

4 (VIII) processing said survey data into survey
5 information;

6 (IX[[I]]) saving said survey information in a
7 database;

8 (~~III~~X)presenting said survey information to a
9 consumer.

1 24. (currently amended) The process of collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 19, further
3 comprising the steps of:

4 (VIII) processing said survey data into survey
5 information;
6 (IX[[I]]) saving said survey information in a
7 database;
8 (~~III~~ X)presenting said survey information to a
9 consumer.

1 25. (currently amended) A process for collecting and
2 presenting survey information comprising the steps of:

3 (I) selecting a participant from a list of
4 potential participants;
5 (II) connecting the participant to a survey
6 communication system;
7 (III)transferring the participant's communication
8 system connection to an automated survey unit
9 if said survey participant agrees to said
10 transfer, wherein the participant participating
11 in an automated survey can be transferred to
12 said agent by a voice command from the
13 participant such that said agent continues with
14 said survey, and further,

15 wherein said survey interview is conducted manually
16 by an agent if the participant does not agree
17 to said transfer,

18 wherein said conducting of said survey interview is
19 performed by providing survey questions to
20 participant using a pre-determined survey
21 procedure utilizing drill-down questioning,
22 wherein a following survey question depends on
23 the answer to a previous question;

24 (IV) conducting said survey interview, wherein said
25 conducting is performed by said automated
26 survey unit or manually, and further wherein
27 said automated survey unit accepts oral
28 responses from the participant, said oral
29 responses being processed using voice
30 recognition into survey data;
31 (V) saving said survey interview in a database.
32 (VI) processing said survey data into survey
33 information;
34 (VII) saving said survey information in a database;
35 and
36 (VIII) presenting said survey information to a
37 consumer, wherein said presenting is available
38 within 24 hours of said conducting of said
39 survey.

1 26. (previously presented) A process for collecting
2 and presenting survey information comprising the steps
3 of:

4 (I) collecting survey data, said collecting
5 comprising the steps of
6 (A) selecting a participant from a list of
7 potential participants, wherein said
8 selecting is done according to specified
9 schedules;
10 (B) connecting the participant to a survey
11 communication system, said connecting
12 comprising the steps of:

13 (i) attempting to connect with the
14 participant via said survey
15 communication system, said attempting
16 including the steps of:
17 (ii) requesting that the participant agree
18 to communicate with an Interactive
19 Voice Recognition (IVR) unit for a
20 survey interview; and
21 (iii) collecting call record information,
22 wherein said call record information
23 is stored in a database;

24 and

25 (C) conducting said survey interview, wherein
26 said conducting is performed by said IVR
27 unit if the participant agreed to
28 communicate with said IVR unit, and
29 further wherein said conducting is
30 performed by a Computer-Assisted Telephone
31 Interview (CATI) agent if the participant
32 did not agree to communicate with said IVR
33 unit, said conducting of said survey
34 interview comprising the steps of:

35 (i) asking survey questions of
36 participant using a pre-determined
37 survey question procedure utilizing
38 drill-down questioning, wherein said
39 survey questions provide sufficient
40 survey data to allow for the creation
41 of survey information; and further
42 wherein survey responses by
43 participant are done orally, and
44 still further wherein said survey

45 data optionally includes voice
46 interviews;

47 (ii) saving said survey data in said
48 database, wherein said saving
49 includes voice recognition processing
50 of said oral responses of the
51 participant if said conducting of
52 survey interview is performed by said
53 IVR unit, wherein said voice
54 recognition occurs at approximately
55 real-time, and further wherein the
56 voice recognition processed response
57 is used to determine a next survey
58 question;

59 (iii) transferring said communication
60 system connection to a CATI unit if
61 the participant requests such a
62 transfer while the IVR unit is
63 conducting said survey interview,
64 wherein said CATI agent uses said
65 CATI unit to continue said conducting
66 a survey interview;

67 (iv) transferring said communication
68 system connection to a CATI unit when
69 said survey question procedure
70 requires such a transfer, wherein
71 said CATI agent then conducts said
72 survey interview using said CATI
73 unit, and further wherein said CATI
74 agent can transfer said communication
75 system connection back to said IVR
76 unit to continue said survey
77 interview;

78 (v) monitoring said survey question
79 procedure status, wherein said status
80 information can be made available for
81 display;

82 (vi) terminating said conducting a survey
83 interview when said pre-determined
84 survey question procedure is complete
85 or when the participant requests such
86 termination;

1 27. (previously presented) A process for collecting
2 and presenting survey information as in claim 26, further
3 comprising the steps of:

4 (I) processing said survey data, wherein said
5 processing converts said survey data collected
6 from a plurality of participants into survey
7 information, said processing comprising the
8 steps of:

9 (A) generating consumer satisfaction measures;

10 (B) generating employee rating measures;

11 (C) generating employer or organization rating
12 measures;

13 (F) generating quality assessment measures;
14 and

15 (G) analyzing said generated measures and
16 survey data;

17 and

18 (H) storing said survey information in said
19 database;

20 (II) providing a survey information consumer said
21 survey information, said providing further
22 comprising the steps of:

23 (A) connecting a survey information consumer
24 computer to a presenting system, wherein
25 said connecting is over a computer
26 network, said connecting comprising the
27 steps of:

28 (i) logging the consumer's computer into
29 the system, wherein the consumer
30 identity is verified; and

31 (iv) preventing the consumer not verified
32 from accessing said medical survey
33 information;

34 (B) presenting said survey information to said
35 consumers, said presenting comprising the
36 steps of:

37 (i) providing said consumers with options
38 for viewing aggregates of said survey
39 information;

40 (ii) providing said consumers with options
41 for viewing summaries of said survey
42 information;

43 (iii) providing said consumers with options
44 for viewing a subset of said survey
45 information;

46 (iii) providing said consumers with options
47 for viewing said survey data; and

48 (iv) formatting said presented information
49 for presenting by said consumer

50 computer, wherein said presenting can
51 be graphical, auditory, and textual;
52 (C) customizing said presented information to
53 the particular needs or access privileges
54 of the consumer, wherein some consumers
55 may have access to a subset of medical
56 information; and
57 (D) allowing the user to log off said system.
58 and
59 (III) evaluating said process for collecting and
60 presenting survey information, said evaluating
61 comprising:
62 (A) evaluating the performance of said CATI
63 agents; and
64 (B) evaluating the performance of said voice
65 recognition processing.

1 28. (previously presented) A process for collecting
2 and presenting medical survey information for a medical
3 care provider comprising the steps of:
4 (I) collecting survey data, said collecting
5 comprising the steps of
6 (A) selecting a participant from a list of
7 potential participants, wherein said
8 selecting is done according to specified
9 schedules;
10 (B) connecting the participant to a survey
11 communication system, said connecting
12 comprising the steps of:
13 (i) attempting to connect with the
14 participant via said survey

15 communication system, said attempting
16 including the steps of:

17 (a) initiating a survey
18 communication system connection;

19 (b) transferring said connection to
20 a CATI unit if said connection
21 is successful, wherein if said
22 connection is not successful,
23 selecting a new participant to
24 be the participant;

25 (c) requesting that the participant
26 agree to participate in a
27 survey, wherein said requesting
28 is performed by said CATI agent
29 using said CATI unit;

30 (d) requesting recall information
31 from the participant if the
32 participant has not agreed to
33 participate in said survey,
34 wherein said requesting is
35 performed by said CATI agent,
36 and further wherein said recall
37 information includes a request
38 to connect again at a different
39 time or using a different
40 communication system; and

41 (e) terminating said connection
42 after said requesting of recall
43 information if the participant
44 has not agreed to participate in
45 said survey;

46 (ii) requesting that the participant agree
47 to communicate with an IVR unit for a
48 survey interview; and
49 (iii)collecting call record information
50 comprising:
51 (a) overall connection attempts;
52 (b) connection attempts for each of
53 the participants contacted; and
54 (c) connection durations;
55 wherein said call record information is stored in a
56 database;
57 and
58 (C) conducting said survey interview, wherein
59 said conducting is performed by said IVR
60 unit if the participant agreed to
61 communicate with said IVR unit, and
62 further wherein said conducting is
63 performed by said CATI agent if
64 participant did not agree to communicate
65 with said IVR unit, said conducting said
66 survey interview comprising the steps of:
67 (i) asking survey questions of
68 participant using a pre-determined
69 survey question procedure utilizing
70 drill-down questioning, wherein said
71 survey questions provide sufficient
72 survey data to allow for the creation
73 of medical survey information; and
74 further wherein survey responses by
75 participant are done orally, and
76 still further wherein said survey

77 data optionally includes voice
78 interviews;

79 (ii) saving said survey data in said
80 database, wherein said saving
81 includes voice recognition processing
82 of said oral responses of the
83 participant if said conducting of
84 survey interview is performed by said
85 IVR unit, wherein said voice
86 recognition occurs at approximately
87 real-time, and further wherein the
88 voice recognition processed response
89 is used to determine a next survey
90 question;

91 (iii) transferring said communication
92 system connection to a CATI unit if
93 the participant requests such a
94 transfer while the IVR unit is
95 conducting said survey interview,
96 wherein said CATI agent uses said
97 CATI unit to continue said conducting
98 a survey interview;

99 (iv) transferring said communication
100 system connection to a CATI unit when
101 said survey question procedure
102 requires such a transfer, wherein
103 said CATI agent then conducts said
104 survey interview using said CATI
105 unit, and further wherein said CATI
106 agent can transfer said communication
107 system connection back to said IVR
108 unit to continue said survey
109 interview;

110 (v) monitoring said survey question
111 procedure status, wherein said status
112 information can be made available for
113 display;

114 (vi) terminating said conducting a survey
115 interview when said pre-determined
116 survey question procedure is complete
117 or when the participant requests such
118 termination;

119 (II) processing said survey data, wherein said
120 processing converts said survey data collected
121 from a plurality of participants into medical
122 survey information, said processing comprising
123 the steps of:

124 (A) generating consumer satisfaction measures
125 comprising:

126 (i) consumer loyalty measures;

127 (ii) medical care satisfaction measures;

128 (iii) medical facility satisfaction
129 measures;

130 (iv) medical staff satisfaction measures;

131 (v) positive comments with reasons; and

132 (vi) negative comments with reasons;

133 (B) generating staff rating measures
134 comprising:

135 (i) staff loyalty measures;

136 (ii) staff performance measures;

137 (iii) staff satisfaction measures; and

138 (iv) staff continuing education measures;

139 (C) generating doctor rating measures
140 comprising:
141 (i) quality of medical care measures;
142 (ii) doctor performance measures;
143 (ii) doctor satisfaction measures;
144 (iii) doctor loyalty measures; and
145 (iv) doctor continuing education measures;
146 (D) generating care delivery measures
147 comprising:
148 (i) cost measures including:
149 (a) cost of medical care paid by
150 consumer measures;
151 (b) cost of medical care paid by
152 non-consumer measures;
153 (c) cost of providing medical care
154 measures; and
155 (d) overhead costs measures;
156 and
157 (ii) profit measures;
158 (E) generating medical care quality assessment
159 measures comprising:
160 (i) mortality measures
161 (ii) morbidity measures;
162 (iii) complications measures;
163 (iv) medical procedure results measures;
164 (iv) medical procedure follow-up measures;
165 (vi) patient mental health measures;
166 (vii) social impact measures;

167 (viii) hospital stay length measures;
168 (ix) technical quality measures; and
169 (x) per member per month (PM PM) cost
170 measures;

171 (F) analyzing said generated measures and
172 survey data, said analyzing comprising the
173 steps of:

174 (i) aggregating survey data to form
175 assessments;

176 (ii) normalizing comparisons between
177 specific named units, said named
178 units including:

179 (a) doctors or specialists;
180 (b) medical care organizations or
181 divisions;
182 (c) staff persons;
183 (d) managers;
184 (e) specific medical treatments; and
185 (f) patient group status;

186 (iii) determining changes over time;
187 (iv) determining differences
188 geographically; and
189 (v) generating summaries;

190 and

191 (G) storing said medical survey information in
192 said database;

193 (III) providing a medical survey information
194 consumer said medical survey information, said
195 providing further comprising the steps of:

196 (A) connecting a medical survey information
197 consumer computer to a presenting system,
198 wherein said connecting is over a computer
199 network, said connecting comprising the
200 steps of:

201 (i) logging in the consumer computer to
202 the system, said login comprising the
203 steps of:

204 (a) processing a consumer login
205 request, said login request
206 comprising the steps of:

207 (1) providing said consumer
208 with a login prompt;

209 (2) accepting a consumer login
210 input, said login input
211 comprising:

212 a user ID; and
213 a user password;

214 and

215 (b) processing the consumer login input, said
216 processing comprising the steps of:

217 comparing said user ID against a verified
218 consumer list, wherein if said user ID is
219 verified, then:

220 verifying said user password by comparing said
221 password to a stored password
222 corresponding to said user ID, if said
223 user password is verified then:

224 permitting consumer access to the system;

225 and

226 preventing the consumer not logged in from
227 accessing said medical survey
228 information;

229 (B) presenting said medical survey information
230 to said consumers, said presenting
231 comprising the steps of:

232 (i) providing said consumers with options
233 for viewing aggregates of said
234 medical survey information;

235 (ii) providing said consumers with options
236 for viewing summaries of said medical
237 survey information;

238 (iii) providing said consumers with options
239 for viewing a subset of said medical
240 survey information;

241 (iii) providing said consumers with options
242 for viewing said medical survey data;
243 and

244 (iv) formatting said presented information
245 for presenting by said consumer
246 computer, said presenting including:
247 graphical display;

248 auditory presentment; and
249 textual display;

250 (C) customizing said presented information to
251 the particular needs or access privileges
252 of the consumer, wherein some consumers
253 may have access to a subset of medical
254 information; and

255 (D) allowing the user to log off said system.

256 and

257 (IV) evaluating said process for collecting and
258 presenting medical survey information, said
259 evaluating comprising:
260 (A) evaluating the performance of said CATI
261 agents; and
262 (B) evaluating the performance of said voice
263 recognition processing.

1 29. (previously presented) A process for collecting
2 and presenting medical survey information for a medical
3 care provider as in claim 25, wherein the participant is
4 selected from the group of doctors, medical staff,
5 medical patients, a family member of a medical patient,
6 and a medical care employer; and further wherein the
7 participant gave or received services from said medical
8 care provider.

1 30. (currently amended) A system for collecting and
2 presenting survey information from a plurality of
3 participants, said system comprising:
4 a connection device connected to an external
5 communication system for connecting said
6 communication system to the survey
7 participants;
8 a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) unit
9 connected to said connection device, wherein,
10 for each one of the participants, a
11 corresponding one of a plurality of agents uses
12 said CATI unit to ask said one of the
13 participants a set of manual survey questions,
14 said survey questions including a question
15 requesting permission for performing an
16 automated survey;

17 an Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) unit
18 connected to said CATI unit, wherein, for each
19 one of the participants, said CATI agent
20 transfers said one of the participants'
21 communication connection to said IVR unit only
22 if said one of the participants agrees to
23 participate in an automated survey, wherein
24 said IVR unit then accepts oral responses from
25 said one of participant, wherein
26 for any of the participants who did not agree to
27 participate in said automated survey, said CATI
28 unit being adapted to provide a manual survey
29 by providing survey questions to each one of
30 the agents corresponding to those participants
31 who did not agree for proving a manual survey
32 using substantially the same questions from
33 said automated survey to receive the oral
34 responses, wherein
35 the system is adapted such that, upon request of any
36 participant undergoing an automated survey,
37 said system transfers said requesting
38 participant to the CATI unit to continue said
39 survey in a manual manner; and
40 a database for storing said responses to said manual
41 surveys and/or said automated surveys.

1 31. (previously presented) The system of claim 30,
2 wherein the survey includes a drill-down survey technique
3 utilizing one or both of responses already provided by
4 the current survey participant and historical responses
5 provided by other participants to determine a subsequent
6 survey question to be asked of the current survey
7 participant.

1 32. (previously presented) The system of claim 31,
2 wherein, when the automated surveys are being conducted,
3 said IVR unit is adapted to receive a response from any
4 of the participants that causes the CATI agent to
5 transfer those surveys receiving said response back to
6 one of the agents.

1 33. (previously presented) The system of claim 31
2 further comprising a processing unit for processing said
3 responses stored in said database into useful survey
4 information for presentation to a user

1 34. (previously presented) The system of claim 1,
2 wherein, when the automated survey is being conducted,
3 said IVR unit is adapted to receive a response from the
4 participant that causes the CATI agent to transfer the
5 survey back to the agent or another agent.

1 35. (previously presented) The system of claim 1
2 further comprising a processing unit for processing said
3 responses stored in said database into useful survey
4 information for presentation to a user.

1 36. (new) An integrated survey system comprising:
2 a connection device connected to an external
3 communication system for connecting said
4 communication system to a survey participant;
5 a database for storing responses to survey
6 questions;
7 a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) unit
8 connected to said connection device, wherein
9 said connection device is adapted to transfer
10 the participant communication connection to

11 said CATI unit when said connection to the
12 survey participant is successful, and wherein
13 said CATI unit is adapted for use by the agent for
14 communicating with the participant, and further
15 wherein
16 said CATI unit is adapted for presenting a survey to
17 said CATI agent for allowing the agent to
18 present said survey to the participant using
19 said CATI unit, and wherein participant
20 responses to said survey are used to generate
21 data for storing in said database;
22 an Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) unit
23 connected to said CATI unit, wherein said CATI
24 unit is adapted for permitting said agent to
25 transfer the participant's communication
26 connection to said IVR unit for conducting said
27 survey in an automated manner, wherein
28 said IVR unit accepts oral responses from the
29 participant for generating data stored in said
30 database, and wherein
31 said IVR unit is further adapted to terminate the
32 automated survey at any point and transfer the
33 participants communication connection back to
34 said CATI unit upon voice command by the
35 participant, and further wherein
36 said system is adapted such that said CATI unit
37 presents said survey to said agent from the
38 point of termination by said IVR unit so that
39 the agent can continue said survey in a manual
40 manner.